

Y375, Summer I 2012: War and International Conflict

Instructor:

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Course section: 13735

Time: MTWR 12:40-2:30pm, Woodburn Hall 002

Office: Woodburn Hall 215

Office Hours: MW 11:30-12:30pm (and by appointment)

Course Overview

The evolution of humankind is inextricably linked to warfare. War is the most destructive act in which humans engage—by conservative estimates, more than 100 million people perished as a direct result of warfare in the 20th century alone. These days, we are flooded with reports of violence from Afghanistan to Syria or South Sudan. How has the nature of warfare evolved? Why are wars so frequent? What are the main causes of war? Are “new wars” of the 21st century different from “old wars” of previous centuries? Is the nature of war beginning to change?

To address these questions, we will examine a set of theories about the causes of both interstate and civil wars. Our main textbook is *Causes of War* by Jack S. Levy and William R. Thompson (Wiley-Blackwell, 2010). We will also read texts from history, sociology, anthropology, economics, psychology, and political geography. We will pair theoretical discussions with examinations of several wars across different time periods and regions.

By the end of this course, you will become familiar with many factors that mitigate or exacerbate military conflict between or within states. You will also be able to apply these factors in analyzing real-world scenarios, such as studying contemporary cases of war or assessing the prospects for future conflict in combustible areas of the world.

Requirements

Required Readings

There are three textbooks for this class:

- Levy, Jack S., and William R. Thompson (2010). *Causes of War*. Malden, MA: Wiley Blackwell.
- Headrick, Daniel (2010). *Power Over Peoples: Technology, Environments, and Western Imperialism, 1400 to the Present*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- Nordstrom, Carolyn (2004). *Shadows of War: Violence, Power, and International Profiteering in the Twenty-First Century*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.

In addition to the textbooks, we will read several articles and book chapters which are posted on Oncourse in pdf format. If you are unable to access them, please contact me as soon as possible at florea@indiana.edu. Also, I strongly advise you to follow current events by frequently accessing the online editions of the New York Times, BBC, CNN, France24, Washington Post, Christian Science Monitor, Economist, Time, The Atlantic.

This is an advanced undergraduate course that requires serious engagement. The readings are mainly drawn from the academic literature. The advantage of this approach is that you will be exposed to the most relevant scholarly debates about war and violence and you will be able to cultivate invaluable analytical skills. The other side of the coin is that the readings are a bit more challenging than what you generally find in most textbooks. As a consequence, the readings will demand substantial time commitment. We will emphasize concepts and theory rather than historical description of events. We will briefly survey existing theoretical approaches that enable us to better understand the causes and consequences of both interstate and intrastate war. At the same time, we will use historical cases to put theories of war to test. In this sense, the guiding question throughout this course will be “why is one theory better equipped than another to explain war X”?

In this course, you’ll learn to become an active and critical reader. You will improve your comprehension of the readings only if you take notes on what you read and write down questions about the readings. When you do the readings, try to think of answers to the following questions: What is the author’s main argument? What does a specific concept mean and why is it important? What are the implications of the argument made by the author? What evidence does the author bring in to support his or her claim? Can you think of an alternative explanation for the author’s evidence?

Attendance

Attendance will be taken daily and is worth **10%** of your grade. Each student starts the class with 10 attendance points. You will lose half a point from your attendance grade every time you are absent. So, if you choose to miss 4 classes over the course of Y375, you will receive 8 attendance points. Only documented absences (doctor’s note, religious holiday etc.) will be accepted.

Participation

Your sustained engagement with the readings and class discussions is crucial to your taking something meaningful away from this course. Therefore, you are expected to be active in this class — participation (**10%** of your grade) is a strong indication of your intellectual engagement with this course. To ensure a fruitful class interaction, at various times, I may ask students to offer their opinion on any of the required readings, or on the topics discussed in class. The participation grade is based on your involvement in class discussions as well as your reactions to the class readings. At least *3 hours before class* on each Monday (starting with the second week), you will be asked to post on Oncourse your reactions (summary of the main argument, comments, questions) to at least two of

the readings for that week. Reactions (300-500 words) posted after the deadline may be brought up during class discussions but will not receive any credit.

Quizzes

Every week, with the exception of the first and fourth weeks, we'll have a quiz. The quizzes will cover both class lectures and the readings for the respective week. Quizzes (15% of your grade) will include short answer questions. It is highly recommended that you take notes on the readings. I am less interested in testing your memory of dates, minor actors, or secondary points; instead, I am more interested in testing your ability to understand the concepts and the theory. There will be 4 quizzes, of which the lowest score will be dropped (i.e., you'll get to keep the 3 highest scores).

Midterm (on May 31)

The midterm (25% of your grade) will be a combination of multiple choice, concept identification and definition, and short essay questions. On May 28, I will provide you with a study guide that includes a range of questions—some of which may appear in the exam. There will be no make-up exams without a documented absence (doctor's note, religious holiday etc.).

Research Paper (due June 14)

For this class, you will write a research paper (35% of your grade) in which you choose an interstate or intrastate war after 1812 and explain its onset, duration, or termination by relying on the theories we cover in class (more details about the paper will posted on Oncourse). More precisely, in this paper you are asked to answer the following questions: What theories best explain the outbreak, duration, or termination of war X? Why is a particular theory of war better equipped to explain war X than other theories? What evidence leads you to conclude that a particular theory adequately explains war X? Is there any evidence that points to alternative explanations for war X?

The research paper (12 to 15 double-spaced pages, Times New Roman) is the largest single part of your grade. I will provide you with a list of interstate and intrastate wars after 1812 and direct you to general information about them. However, for this assignment, you need to read at least 10 extra scholarly resources (scholarly articles, books, book chapters etc.) on which you will dwell to analyze the conflict that you choose. Also, you must submit a 2-page research paper proposal (5% of your grade) on May 30. This proposal should briefly describe the conflict your paper will address and list the 10 academic sources you plan to use. If you decide to change your paper topic once I have accepted your proposal, you need to notify me and submit a new proposal no later than June 1st.

The research paper is due in hard copy at the beginning of class on June 14. For each hour your paper is late, there will be a penalty of 3% of your grade. Hence, if you submit your paper more than 10 hours after the deadline, you will not receive any credit for it. For your own protection, I encourage you to have frequent backups on different disks.

“Lost paper” and “computer crash” claims will not be considered if you are unable to produce at minimum an advanced draft of your paper. All papers must be uploaded on Oncourse (Assignments 2 tab) before class on the day they are due in order to be screened by Turnitin for plagiarism.

Paper guidelines (please note that failure to comply with any of these guidelines may result in a 10% penalty for your grade):

- your research paper proposal will not be shorter than 2 pages or longer than 3 pages (excluding the list of the 10 required sources); your proposal ends on the 2nd or 3rd page, and your list of the 10 sources starts on the following page
- your research paper will not be shorter than 12 pages or longer than 15 pages (excluding the bibliography and any tables, charts, graphs you may have); your paper ends on the 12th or 15th page, and your bibliography starts on the following page
- Please use Times New Roman, 12-point font, and double-space your papers
- You may print your papers double-sided
- Please staple (not clip) your paper together
- Your sources will be integrated in the body of your papers (you’ll provide full documentation of these sources in the bibliography). For instance, you may use the following style—(Nye 2004, 32-34)—which includes the author’s name, year of publication, and page numbers. You may use any style you prefer for footnotes, endnotes, and bibliography as long as you are consistent
- You may not use any Internet sources such as Wikipedia.

Your grade for the final paper will be based on my assessment of the following questions:

- Does the paper meet the requirements?
- Is the paper generally well-organized? Does it flow in a logical manner?
- Are the arguments clearly supported by the evidence?
- Does the conclusion summarize the paper effectively?

The requirements are not met if you commit the following substantive errors (each of which results in a loss of anywhere from 5% to 10% from your paper grade):

- Concept(s) incorrectly defined
- Key points or arguments are misrepresented
- Key points or arguments are oversimplified

- Claims are made without proper documentation in the text
- Circular (or tautological) arguments are made
- The paper is poorly organized
- The paper is descriptive rather than analytical.

Important Dates

May 17—First Quiz

May 24—Second Quiz

May 28—No Class (Memorial Day)

May 30—Paper Proposal Due

May 31—Midterm

June 7—Third Quiz

June 12—Fourth Quiz

June 14—Final Paper Due

Course policies

Grade assignment

Grades are assigned on the following point scale: A+=97-100; A=93-96; A-=90-92; B+=87-89; B=83-86; B-=80-82; C+=77-79; C=73-76; C-=70-72; D+=67-69; D=63-66; D-=60-62; F=59 and below. You are entitled to an explanation of your grades. If you wish to challenge your grade, you must write a detailed memo explaining why you think you deserved a better grade. Once the memo has been received, an appointment will be scheduled to discuss the matter in detail.

Classroom civility

Arriving late for class, using smartphones/tablets in class, packing up bags prior to the end of class are disruptive activities. You may use a laptop for taking notes, but please refrain from browsing the internet or checking email. Incivility will not be tolerated. You are strongly encouraged to ask questions, think freely and openly, and be critical towards the readings and lectures. In interactive environments, it is absolutely natural for students to approach topics from different perspectives and belief systems. You are encouraged to challenge the instructor's, authors', and your peers' ideas, but derogative statements will not be tolerated. Unacceptable behavior in class includes (but is not limited to): (a) Personal attacks. This includes attacks on a person's appearance, demeanor, or political beliefs. (b) Interrupting your instructor or other students. Raise your hand and wait to be called on. (c) Using the discussion to argue for political positions and/or beliefs. If political discussions arise, they must be discussed as scholarly endeavors. (d) Using raised tones, engaging in arguments with other students, and being aggressive. Failure to abide by these common-sense principles can result in academic

penalties ranging from a lowered grade, to dismissal, to failing the course.

Plagiarism

Plagiarism is defined by Indiana University as “the use of the work of others without properly crediting the actual source of ideas, words, sentences, paragraphs, entire articles, music, or pictures.” The university’s position is that “plagiarism, a form of cheating, is a serious offense and will be severely punished.” Oncourse posts or final papers which contain plagiarized sections will automatically receive an F, and may lead to disciplinary action by IU.¹ Plagiarism can be easily avoided by properly citing all references that you use. When in doubt about a source, be on the safe side and use the proper citation.

Schedule

Week 1 (5/8–5/10): The origins and evolution of war

- Cioffi-Revilla, Claudio (2000). “Ancient Warfare: Origins and Systems,” in Manus I. Midlarsky, ed., *Handbook of War Studies II*. Ann Arbor, University of Michigan Press, pp. 59-92. (*available here*).
- Levy, Jack, and William R. Thompson (2011). *The Arc of War: Origins, Escalation, and Transformation*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. Chapter 2. (*Oncourse*).
- Headrick (2010): Introduction and Chapters 4–8.

Week 2 (5/14 –5/17): War and state-making; Intro to the causes of war

- Tilly, Charles (1990). *Coercion, Capital, and European States, AD 990-1990*. Cambridge, MA: Blackwell. Chapters 1 and 3. (*Oncourse*).
- Spruyt, Hendrik (1994). *The Sovereign State and Its Competitors*. Princeton: Princeton University Press. Introduction and Chapter 2. (*Oncourse*).
- Centeno, Miguel (2003). *Blood and Debt: War and the Nation-State in Latin America*. University Park, PA: Penn State University Press. Chapter 1. (*Oncourse*).
- Taylor, Brian D., and Roxana Botea (2008). “Tilly Tally: War-Making and State-Making in the Contemporary Third World,” *International Studies Review* 10(1): 27-56. (*Oncourse*).
- Rasler, Karen, and William R. Thompson (2012). “War Making and State Making: How and Where Does It Fit into the Bigger Picture?” in *What Do We Know About War?* 2nd edition, edited by John A. Vasquez. New York: Routledge, pp. 237-255. (*Oncourse*).

¹Please note that your final papers will be scanned for plagiarism with Turnitin.

- Levy and Thompson (2010): Chapter 1.

Week 3 (5/21–5/24): Causes of war—systemic and dyadic theories

- Levy, Jack S. (1998). "The Causes of War and the Conditions of Peace," *Annual Review of Political Science* 1: 139-66. (*Oncourse*).
- Levy and Thompson (2010): Chapter 2.
- 2011. Levy, Jack S. (2007). "International Sources of Interstate and Intrastate War," in *Leashing the Dogs of War*, edited by Chester A. Crocker, Fen Osler Hampson, and Pamela All. Washington D.C.: USIP Press, pp. 17-38. (*Oncourse*).
- Levy and Thompson (2010): Chapter 3 and pp. 104-120.
- Fearon, James D. (1995). "Rationalist Explanations for War," *International Organization* 49: 379-414. (*Oncourse*).
- Hassner, Ron (2003). "To Halve and to Hold: Conflicts over Sacred Space and the Problem of Indivisibility," *Security Studies* 12(4): 1-33. (*Oncourse*).

Week 4 (5/29–5/31): Causes of war—state-level and psychological theories

- Levy and Thompson (2010): Chapters 4-5.
- Oates, Amy (2006). "Diversionary War and Argentina's Invasion of the Falklands," *Security Studies* 15(3): 431-63. (*Oncourse*).
- Robert Jervis (1988). "War and Misperception," *Journal of Interdisciplinary History* 18(4): 675-700. (*Oncourse*).
- Levy, Jack S. (2011). "Theories and Causes of War," in *The Handbook on the Political Economy of War*, edited by Christopher Coyne and Rachel L. Mathers. Northampton, MA: Edward Elgar, pp. 13-33. (*Oncourse*).

Week 5 (6/4–6/7): Civil wars

- Levy and Thompson (2010): Chapter 7.
- Kalyvas, Stathis (2007). "Civil Wars," in *Oxford Handbook of Political Science*, edited by Carles Boix and Susan Stokes. New York: Oxford University Press, pp. 416-434. (*Oncourse*).
- Mason, David T. (2009). "The Evolution of Theory on Civil War and Revolution," in *Handbook of War Studies III: The Intrastate Dimension*, edited by Manus Midlarsky. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, pp. 63-99. (*available here*).

- Nordstrom, Carolyn (2004). *Shadows of War: Violence, Power, and International Profiteering in the Twentieth-First Century*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, pp. 1-155.
- Kalyvas, Stathis N. (2001). "'New' and 'Old' Civil Wars: A Valid Distinction?" *World Politics* 54(1): 99-118. (*Oncourse*).

Week 6 (6/11–6/14): The future of war

- Levy and Thompson (2010): Chapter 8.
- Mueller, John (2009). "War Has Almost Ceased to Exist: An Assessment," *Political Science Quarterly* 124(2): 297-321. (*Oncourse*).
- Huntington, Samuel P. (1993) "The Clash of Civilizations?" *Foreign Affairs* 72(3): 22-49. (*Oncourse*).
- Crenshaw, Martha (2007). "Explaining Suicide Terrorism: A Review Essay," *Strategic Studies* 16(1): 133-162. (*Oncourse*).
- Clionadh, Raleigh and Henrik Urdal (2007). "Climate Change, Environmental Degradation and Armed Conflict," *Political Geography* 26(6): 674-694. (*Oncourse*).
- Pinker, Steven (2011). *The Better Angels of Our Nature: Why Violence Has Declined*. New York: Viking (selections). (*Oncourse*).

Grade overview Your final grade will be composed of the following:

- I. Attendance—10%
- II. Class participation—10%
- III. Quizzes—15%
- IV. Midterm—25%
- V. Paper proposal—5%
- VI. Final paper—35%